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C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 001171

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SUBJECT: GHANAIAAN FOREIGN MINISTER ON FAILED GBAGBO MEETING

REF: YATES-BRIDGEWATER TELCON AND E-MAILS

Classified By: Ambassador Mary C. Yates, reason 1.4 (B/D).

11. (C) Ambassador Yate and polchief met with Foreign Minister Nana Akufo-Addo at his request on June 2. Akufo-Addo told Ambassador Yates that a meeting scheduled for June 3 in Abuja, consisting of Presidents Kufuor, Obasanjo and Gbagbo, Prime Minister Diarra, and ECOWAS Executive Secretary Ibn Chambas, to discuss the political impasse in

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Cote d'Ivoire, had just fallen through. Gbagbo had initially agreed to the meeting, said Akufo-Addo, but had just bowed out due to a claimed "invitation" to travel immediately to Washington for undisclosed meetings. Akufo-Addo asked if the USG had issued any invitation to Gbagbo. "We want to know if Gbagbo is playing games with us," said Akufo-Addo. Ambassador said she was unaware of any invitation from the USG but would verify that with the Department. When Ambassador Yates theorized that perhaps Gbagbo perhaps had meetings arranged with the UN in New York, Akufo-Addo said that "Kofi Annan knows about the meeting and wants Gbagbo there (in Abuja)."

12. (C) In commenting briefly on the situation in Cote d'Ivoire, Akufo-Addo said that "Gbagbo must reach an accommodation with Soro, Bedie and Ouattara." There was, he said, "no other option." He further commented that the Linas-Marcoussis Accords (LMA) would not be subject to any "review or renegotiation." While isolated "looks" at specific provisions to "enhance implementation" was possible, there was no interest within ECOWAS, he said, for any "opening up" of the LMA. "There will be no LMA-2," he said.

13. (C) Subsequently Ambassador Yates learned from PDAS Bridgewater (ref telecon) that the GOCI had recently employed a Washington lobbyist, who had been seeking appointments with senior Department officials. The Department had given the lobbyist no encouragement, and no appointments or invitations had been given. Ambassador Yates communicated this information to Akufo-Addo in a telephone call, also June 2.

14. (C) Comment. Akufo-Addo was his usual brisk and business-like self. While we leave it to our colleagues in Abidjan to decipher Gbagbo's true motivation in declining to attend the Abuja meeting, Akufo-Addo took an entirely unsympathetic view of what appeared to him to be Gbagbo's unconvincing explanations. End summary.
Yates